



## **JILL WILSON IS RUNNING FOR ARMY SGT. JESSICA M. HOUSBY**

23, of Rock Island, Ill.; assigned to the 1644th Transportation Company, Army National Guard, Rock Falls, Ill.; killed Feb. 9 when an improvised explosive device detonated near her convoy in Route Golden, Iraq.

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ROCK ISLAND, Ill. — Sgt. Jessica M. Housby was always willing to help people, and greeted strangers and friends with a smile, relatives said.

“Someone who has never met her or talked to her would say, ‘Wow this was a good person.’ If there were hard times, she did her best to help,” Housby’s mother, Deborah Bundy, said.

The 23-year-old Illinois National soldier from Rock Island died in Iraq after a roadside bomb detonated near the truck she was driving, military officials said Thursday.

Housby’s truck was part of a convoy hauling cargo to a base at the Baghdad airport on Wednesday when the explosion occurred and she was killed, said Maj. Tim Franklin, a public affairs officer for the Army National Guard.



Housby, a 2000 graduate of Rock Island High School, was a member of the 1644th Transportation Co., based in Rock Falls. Franklin said Housby was serving her first tour in Iraq.

Bundy said Housby enlisted in the National Guard in 1999, while still attending high school.

Her desire to join the military started in high school, where she joined the ROTC, said her mother, who lives just outside of Rock Island in Milan.

Lt. Archie Rose of the Illinois National Guard said Housby received an award in 1999 after taking part in a training exercise at Fort McCoy, Wis.

She was chosen as the top cadet out of a group of 187 because of her “hard work, enthusiasm and the responsibility,” he said.



Though Housby told her mother she was scared of being deployed in Iraq, Bundy said her daughter knew she was there to serve and protect her country.

The 1644th was mobilized for its second deployment in Iraq in August. It is a medium truck company with about 170 members.

